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ABSTRACT

Rules for parliamentary procedure are essential to any organization in the conduct of its business sessions. Originally these rules were devised to guide a parliament or congress in orderly procedure. In student councils and other school organizations, there is not time to consider orderly procedure as deeply as parliaments must--nor is there need for maneuvers of delay and sidetracting. Instead, student officers need a reasonably direct, straightforward guide for running a meeting. That is what this booklet is intended to accomplish. It will serve as an important and convenient reference to many student groups. However helpful this booklet will be, readers should remember that parliamentary procedure is necessary and useful only to the extent that it is learned in connection with the function it fulfills. To study this booklet as subject matter to be memorized for its own sake would not be profitable. (Author/PC)

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A Call to Order

By

DONALD I. WOOD

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By

DONALD I. WOOD

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Foreword

Rules for parliamentary procedure are essential to any organization in the conduct of its business sessions. Originally these rules were devised to guide a parliament or congress in orderly procedure. Hence, an emphasis on *Robert's Rules of Order*, so often listed but so rarely read.

In student councils and other school organizations, there is not time to consider orderly procedure as deeply as parliaments must—nor is there need for maneuvers of delay and sidetracking. Instead, student officers need a reasonably direct, straightforward guide for running a meeting. That is what *A Call to Order* is intended to accomplish. It will serve as an important and convenient reference to many student groups.

Helpful as this booklet will be, however, readers should remember that parliamentary procedure is necessary and useful only to the extent that it is learned in connection with the function it fulfills. To study this booklet as subject matter to be memorized for its own sake would not be profitable.

We commend Donald I. Wood, the author; Gerald M. Van Pool, NASSP Director of Student Activities, who, with the NASC Advisory Committee, initiated this series; and John F. Kourmadas, NASSP Director of Editorial Services, who prepared the manuscript for publication and saw it through to completion.

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Secretary
National Association of Student Councils
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National Association of Secondary-School Principals

A Call to Order

Planning the Meeting

Good meetings result from planning which begins well in advance of the scheduled meeting time. All officers and the faculty adviser should meet together before the meeting is scheduled to thoroughly plan every step of the meeting. It is at this time that the agenda for the meeting is developed.

The agenda is a simple document which can be duplicated and given to each member so that he will know the pattern of the meeting item-by-item. To prepare an agenda, the organization must have decided upon an order of business. This order is arranged for convenience and enables the members to know in advance when each type of business will be considered. It may be that the order of business is provided for in the organization's by-laws or standing rules. If the by-laws do not contain an order of business, there is a standard pattern for most meetings. It must be remembered, however, that any organization's order of business ought to have flexibility. The order of business should also be individualized. For example, many groups have expanded and changed the general order of business into an order that is highly particularized to meet their own needs. This is as it should be.

The usual order of business is as follows: (1) Call to order; (2) Devotional; (3) Roll Call; (4) Reading or disposition of minutes of previous meeting; (5) Report of the

Treasurer; (6) Reports of standing and special committees; (7) Unfinished business; (8) New business; (9) Announcements; (10) Adjournment.

CALL TO ORDER

Meetings should be called to order promptly at the appointed time. The presiding officer calls the meeting to order by rapping *one time* with his gavel and announcing: "The meeting will please come to order." The chairman may reasonably expect that, when the gavel is tapped and the announcement has been made, the assembly will immediately become quiet and come to order.

It is well to remember that the gavel is a badge of office and an emblem of authority. No well-regulated organization transacts business without one. The gavel is used to obtain and maintain order and adjourn a meeting. It is never used to declare the results of a vote on a motion. Sparing use of the gavel is the rule to be followed in all cases.

The chairman should bring to all meetings the gavel, a copy of the agenda, the organization constitution and by-laws, a reference book on parliamentary procedure, a complete roster of committees, a watch or other timepiece, a calendar to settle future dates, a supply of paper, and a pen.

Two rights are automatically forfeited when one presides—to take part in discussions and to vote on motions. A chairman never shows partiality or in any way attempts to influence the decisions of the group while presiding. If a chairman feels that he must contribute to the discussion, he may ask the vice-president or another member to "chair" the meeting for him. He may then "step down" and enter into the discussion. This is a privilege that must not be abused. Ordinarily, once having "stepped down" from the chair the chairman does not preside again during that meeting.

A chairman may, at his discretion, cast the deciding vote after a tie vote has taken place.

DEVOTIONAL

Following the call to order the presiding officer may announce the leader of the devotional exercise. A poem, a short story with a moral, a song, or some other appropriate activity will be quite helpful to set a quiet, business-like tone for a business meeting. Many student organizations have, as one of their officers, a chaplain who usually conducts the devotional exercise at the beginning of a business meeting.

ROLL CALL

The purpose of the roll call is to record the number of members present, to note absentees, and to determine whether a quorum is present. Usually the constitution or by-laws of an organization will state the number of members necessary to constitute a quorum. If the constitution and by-laws do not specify the number necessary to transact business, the rule is that the majority of members (one over half of the total number) shall be present. The roll call is optional in student organizations unless it is definitely provided for in either the constitution or by-laws because it is very time consuming. The secretary stands when calling the roll in order to be heard and to hear those responding. The accepted form for answering roll call is "Present." Never say "Here."

If absences are noted, after the roll call the chairman says: "The secretary will supply the list of members absent. Will the absentee committee (or another group or individual) ascertain the cause of their absence?" The chairman should expect that within a day or two following the meeting the absentee committee will turn into him a written record of the causes for members' absences.

When time is a factor in taking roll, members may be required to sign their names on rosters near the entrance or attendance may be checked by tellers.

READING OR DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

Following the roll call the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting or meetings is the next item of business. The presiding officer may say: "The secretary will please read the minutes of the last meeting." Or, if the meeting is to be a busy one the presiding officer may say: "If there is no objection, we will dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting." This has the effect of postponing the reading of the minutes until some future time. If reading of the minutes has been postponed for several previous meetings, the secretary should be directed to read all previously unread minutes. After the minutes have been read, they are corrected, if necessary, and approved. Members may postpone the reading of the minutes to another meeting by majority vote or by unanimous consent, unless some member objects.

The secretary normally sits at the side of the presiding officer during all business meetings. When the chair announces the reading of the minutes, the secretary should stand and read the minutes in a voice loud and clear enough to be heard by the entire assembly. Minutes should be typewritten on a good quality paper and should be signed by the secretary.

After the secretary has read the minutes the chairman will say: "You have heard the reading of the minutes. Are there any corrections?" He will then pause and after a reasonable period of time, if there are no corrections, he will say: "If not, the minutes are approved." If a member offers corrections or asks for additions to the minutes, those additions and corrections should be made immediately. When

the corrections have been made the chairman says: "Are there any further corrections?" He pauses, and if there are no further corrections, he says: "If not, the minutes are approved as corrected." The secretary then passes the written minutes to the chairman to be signed in a space provided following the signature of the secretary. The signature of the chairman signifies approval of the minutes.

The minutes of any organization are a record of what is done and not what is said. Minutes contain: (1) The date, place, and time of meeting; (2) Whether it is a regular or special meeting; (3) The name of the person presiding; (4) The name of the secretary; (5) All main motions, whether adopted or rejected, but not withdrawn motions; (6) The names of the persons proposing the motions but not the name of person who seconds the motion; (7) Points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost.

As soon as a meeting is over the secretary must transcribe her notes and compose the minutes of the meeting just ended. The minutes should be typewritten on a good quality bond paper with at least three carbons. A good secretary will be sure that a copy of the minutes is in the hands of the chairman of the organization, the faculty adviser to the organization, and the school principal the day following a business meeting. Many student councils duplicate the minutes of their meetings to be distributed to homerooms or other constituent groups.

It is the duty of the secretary to keep a file of all minutes of the organization including such exhibits as treasurer's reports, reports of standing and special committees, official correspondence, and other documents pertaining to the work of the group. At the end of the school year the minutes and exhibits may be placed in chronological order and bound as permanent records of the school. Most often these records are placed in the school library so that they may be referred to readily by succeeding groups.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

After approval of the minutes, the chairman says: "You will please listen to the report of the treasurer." The treasurer should rise and say: "Mr. President, as treasurer of the . . . . . , I submit the following report." The report of the treasurer should contain the following information: (1) The balance of money on hand at the time of the last meeting; (2) The amount of money received since the last meeting; (3) The amount of money disbursed since the last meeting; and (4) The balance on hand at the time of the present meeting. The treasurer should sign the report and give it to the secretary after it has been read. The chair should say: "You have heard the report of the treasurer. With the consent of the assembly this report will be placed on file." The treasurer's report and other financial reports should never be voted on until after they have been audited. It is impossible to verify the accuracy of figures by simply hearing them read.

The treasurer is the official custodian of the funds and disbursing officer of an organization. As custodian, he is responsible for collecting money due the organization and for its safekeeping. The treasurer must keep an accurate record of all funds collected and disbursed. He must be able to furnish a statement at any time showing the financial condition of the organization.

As disbursing officer, the treasurer is responsible for checking all bills and vouchers which are presented for payment, and for issuing checks to cover them.

A treasurer ought to be chosen for his integrity and his bookkeeping ability as well as his leadership capabilities. He should give a brief report or summary at each meeting, and a complete report annually. The treasurer's books should be audited by a committee or by auditors selected by the organization. For the protection of the treasurer, some student organizations require that the officer be bonded.

Above all the treasurer must be completely familiar with the school's procedures regarding the keeping and accounting of student activity funds. Compliance with the rules set up by the school administration will ensure the safe and efficient handling of all funds. A newly elected treasurer ought to consult with the faculty adviser or the school principal to learn the correct and acceptable financial procedures.

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The presiding officer should next call upon the chairman of each standing committee and special committee for a report. The usual order is: (1) The chairmen of standing committees in the order in which the committees are named in the constitution or in the by-laws; (2) The chairmen of special committees in the order of their appointment.

The presiding officer will say: "The business next in order is hearing reports of the standing committees. You will please listen to the report of the ..... committee, John Doe, Chairman." The committee chairman rises and says: "Mr. President, as chairman of the ..... committee, I submit its report." He then reads the report of the committee.

It is good practice to require that all committee reports be typewritten and signed by the chairman of the committee. Signatures of all committee members may or may not be required. The signed reports should be handed to the secretary to become an exhibit of the minutes of the meeting.

Following the reading of the reports the chairman says: "You have heard the reports of the standing committees. With the consent of the assembly these reports will be placed on file."

Following reports of standing committees the chairman says: "The business next in order is hearing reports of special committees. You will please listen to a report of the

. . . . . committee." The committee chairman should rise and say: "Mr. President, as chairman of the . . . . . committee, I submit its report."

The same rules which govern the procedures of presenting reports of standing committees hold true for reports of special committees.

Following the reading of the reports of special committees the chairman should say: "You have heard the reports of the special committees. With the consent of the assembly these reports will be placed on file." All committee reports become exhibits to the minutes of a meeting and should be kept with the minutes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Following the committee reports, the presiding officer should call for unfinished business. He may say: "Unfinished business is now in order." Or "Is there any unfinished business?"

Unfinished business consists of all business which has been carried over from the last meeting, as well as any matters which have been postponed to this particular meeting. These items of business should have already been ascertained by the executive committee of the organization which met to plan the agenda for the meeting. The items of business should be included in the agenda.

It is the duty of the presiding officer to present any item of unfinished business. For example, he may say: "We will now consider the motion, proposed at our last meeting by John Doe and postponed to this meeting. The secretary will please read this motion." Or the presiding officer may say, "Unfinished business is next in order. The first item listed on the agenda is . . . . . Will the secretary please read the motion." After the secretary has read the motion, the chairman continues: "You have heard the reading of

the motion that this organization ..... Is there any discussion?"

The discussion and vote on the motion will follow.

Unfinished business is never referred to as "old business."

NEW BUSINESS

When the unfinished business has been completed, the presiding officer announces: "New business is next in order," or, "Is there any new business to come before the assembly?"

Announcement of new business offers an opportunity for members to bring before the group any motions which they wish to have considered by the organization for the first time. If no new business is presented, and the agenda lists matters which should be considered, the chair should inform the assembly of these matters and ask if any member wishes to propose a motion covering them. Ordinarily most items of new business will have been discussed by the executive committee of the organization prior to the meeting and will be included in the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

When all members who wish to present motions have done so, the presiding officer should call for announcements.

Business will be expedited if it is possible to confine all announcements to the period set aside for them, rather than to have them presented at various times throughout the meeting. The chairman should: (1) call upon members who previously have indicated to him that they wish to make announcements; (2) ask if there are other members who have announcements; and (3) conclude with his own announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

When the business of a meeting appears to be completed, some member should move to adjourn. As soon as a motion to adjourn is proposed, the chairman should put the motion to a vote, and if the motion carries, he will announce that

the meeting is adjourned. The meeting is not adjourned until formal announcement of its adjournment is made by the chairman. The motion to adjourn is the only motion that does not require a quorum.

If no member moves to adjourn the chairman should say: "Is there any further business to come before the assembly? If not, a motion to adjourn is in order." After gaining recognition by the chair any member may say: "Mr. Chairman, I move to adjourn." The motion to adjourn must be seconded. Following a second the chair will say: "It has been moved and seconded to adjourn." The chair then takes the vote and announces the result. If the motion is carried the assembly stands adjourned.

A Call to Order

Methods of Voting

A vote is usually taken by one of the following methods: voice vote, rising, show of hands, roll call, ballot, or unanimous consent. Each method is suited to a particular situation. The presiding officer or the members of the group have the right to decide which method should be used in voting on any question, unless the by-laws or rules require that a specific method be used. The presiding officer should give specific directions for voting regardless of the method used.

The chairman should remember that a majority is at least one vote more than one half of the votes cast. A two-thirds vote means two-thirds of the votes cast. There is a difference in two-thirds of the votes cast, two-thirds of the members present, and two-thirds of the entire membership, whether present or not.

VOICE VOTE

The voice vote is the most commonly used method of voting. The voice vote may be determined rapidly; however, it is not an accurate method of counting votes. The method is useful for routine and commonly agreed upon motions.

The presiding officer puts a question to vote by stating the motion and adding: "Those in favor say 'Aye' . . . . . those opposed say 'No.' " If there is no doubt in the mind

of the chairman as to the result, he announces it by saying: "The motion is carried," or "The motion is lost." If the presiding officer is doubtful about the result of the vote, he should call for a second voice vote or for a rising vote.

The chairman should remember that the adverb meaning yes is spelled "a-y-e" and pronounced "I."

If any member is in doubt as to the exact result of the vote, or if he does not agree with the chairman's announcement of the result, he may call for "a division of the house" in order to verify the vote. This request requires the chairman to take a vote by rising or show of hands. Division of the house must be called for before any other business intervenes and for this reason can interrupt a speaker.

RISING VOTE

A vote by rising or by show of hands is desirable when a vote is being taken on an important question, when accuracy is essential, or when there is an obvious difference of opinion. This method consumes a little more time than the voice vote, but it is more accurate and allows members to see who is voting and how.

In small assemblies, when a rising vote is close, the members should always be counted; by the presiding officer, by the secretary, or by tellers appointed by the chairman. If it is evident that there is no doubt as to the result of the vote, it is not necessary for the chairman to ask that a count be taken unless the assembly requests it.

When a count is taken, the chairman should announce the result as follows: "The vote is affirmative—62; negative—102. The motion is lost."

Motions which require a specific vote, such as two-thirds vote or a majority, should never be put to vote by a voice vote, since an accurate method of voting is required. In such instances, a rising vote is usually taken.

The vote by rising or by a show of hands is necessary

when a division of the house is called for to verify an indecisive voice vote.

VOTING BY ROLL CALL

A vote by roll call is accurate but it is very time consuming. It is ordinarily used only when members are voting as representatives, so that their constituency will have an exact record of how their representatives voted, or when the by-laws require a vote by roll call.

When taking a vote by roll call, the presiding officer should state the motion and then say: "Those in favor of the motion will answer 'Yes' as their names are called. Those opposed to the motion will answer 'No.' The secretary will please call the roll."

The names of all members eligible to vote are then called in alphabetical order, or in some other agreed upon sequence, and the vote of each member is recorded. If a member does not wish to vote he may answer, "Present," unless the rules of the organization forbid this response. When the vote by roll call is completed, the chairman must announce the result: " 'Yes'—62. 'No'—26. The motion is carried."

VOTING BY BALLOT

Voting by ballot is the only method which enables a member to keep his vote secret. This method is frequently required when electing officers, voting on amendments to the constitution or by-laws, or deciding other important matters.

A motion to vote by ballot or by any other method can be proposed at any time as an incidental motion and requires a majority vote.

When a vote by ballot is required by the constitution and by-laws, it is not possible to move to suspend this requirement.

UNANIMOUS OR GENERAL CONSENT

Organizations frequently decide routine and non-controversial subjects without the formality of taking a vote. When there is unanimous or general agreement, considerable time may be saved by this procedure.

When a routine matter of business comes before an organization, the chairman frequently says, for example, "You have heard the reading of the minutes and corrected them. If there is no objection, the minutes will stand approved as corrected."

The chairman should hesitate long enough to give members an opportunity to state an objection. If at this point no one objects, the minutes will have been approved by "unanimous or general consent." If any member wishes to object, he says, "I object." If objection is raised, some member may propose a motion authorizing the procedure which has been objected to. This motion is considered and voted upon in the usual manner.

Often a matter is obviously approved or disapproved by all present; the chair may say, "If there is no objection, we will consider this matter 'approved' (or 'rejected')." Members must be given an opportunity for objection. If one member objects, a formal vote must be taken. Motions approved or disapproved in this way are recorded as having been disposed of by "unanimous consent" or "general consent."

Acting by unanimous consent is an advisable procedure only on matters where there is no disagreement. A competent chairman is alert to those matters which can be decided by unanimous consent, and he should also recognize the controversial subjects which require that every rule of parliamentary procedure be carefully observed.

TAKING THE BALLOT VOTE

If the vote is on candidates for office, the tellers named by the presiding officer should include a friend or supporter

of each candidate. The teller first named is the chief teller.

If the candidates or measures to be voted on are known ahead of time, printed ballots are desirable. Prepared ballots result in far fewer errors than those written by each individual member. Uniform slips of paper should be distributed in any case.

It is the duty of the tellers to see that each qualified member receives one ballot. If a voter makes an error which cannot be easily corrected, he may hand his ballot to the presiding officer who destroys it and requests the teller to furnish another ballot. Tellers are responsible for furnishing pencils or other facilities for voting. After the tellers have distributed the ballots, the presiding officer should ask, "Is anyone without a ballot?"

The presiding officer should give careful directions for marking the ballots. The presiding officer should instruct all members to fold their ballots. He should give explicit instructions to the tellers regarding how and where the ballots should be counted; but the tellers themselves have the sole authority to collect the ballots, to count them, and to report the results to the presiding officer.

Any member has the right to be present while the ballots are being counted; but he may not interfere in any way with the tellers' work, since he is an observer only.

The chairman of the tellers, when called upon by the presiding officer, should read the report of the tellers but should not state whether the proposition has carried or failed, or which candidates are elected. The chief teller should hand the report to the chairman, who must announce the final result by stating which propositions have carried or which candidates have been elected.

The secretary should keep the marked ballots in a sealed envelope for a reasonable time in case a recount should become necessary.

A Call to Order

Nominations and Elections

A nomination is the formal presentation to the assembly of a name of a candidate for the office to be filled. Nominations may be made by a member from the floor or the nominees may be named in a report by a nominating committee.

If the constitution or by-laws do not state the method of nominating officers, any member may offer a motion determining how the nominations are to be presented. This is an incidental motion and may be amended but not debated.

Regardless of how nominations are made, members are not limited to voting for the candidates nominated. A member may vote for any person who is eligible, regardless of whether he has been nominated. Any member who receives the required number of votes is elected. A nomination, therefore, serves only to focus attention upon certain members as nominees, and no member is barred from election by the fact that he has not been nominated.

NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

The chair may invite nominations from the floor by saying, "Nominations for the office of president are now in order." Any member may rise and nominate another member: "I nominate John Jones for president." The chair should repeat each nomination, "John Jones is nominated."

A nomination does not require a second. In some student organizations it is customary to preface the formal nomination by a short nominating speech describing the fitness of the nominee for the office. Such speeches may serve a valuable purpose in large student organizations where nominees are unknown to some of the members.

As each name is presented for nomination, the secretary should record it. If possible, another member should write the name on a blackboard which the members can see.

In most modern organizations, and especially in secondary schools, it is permissible for any member to nominate himself for an office if, in his own judgment, he feels that he has the competency to discharge the duties of that office. Many people view self-nomination as particularly desirable in student organizations.

NOMINATIONS BY COMMITTEE

Many organizations prefer to have nominations for offices made by a nominating committee which is either elected or appointed. A nominating committee is able to make as thorough an investigation of the nominees' qualifications as the members wish. Thus, a more considered choice of nominees is possible. A second advantage is that a nominating committee can interview prospective nominees and make sure that they are willing to serve if nominated and elected.

Each organization should decide whether or not the name of more than one nominee shall be presented for each office by the nominating committee. There is a common misconception that a member of a nominating committee may not be nominated for office by the committee. Election to the nominating committee is not equivalent to disbarment as a candidate for election.

The final report of the nominating committee must be formally voted upon at a meeting of the committee and signed by a majority of the members of the committee.

The report of the nominating committee to the membership is usually made at a meeting previous to the date of the election. Names of all candidates for each office should appear on the agenda of the meeting in which the election is to be held.

When the report of the nominating committee is called for, it is read by the chairman of the committee and is handed to the secretary. Formal approval of the committee's report is not necessary. The presiding officer should read the title of the first office and the name of the nominee(s) presented by the committee for that office, and ask, "Are there any further nominations?" He should then read, in turn, the titles of the other offices and the names of the other nominees presented by the committee. In each instance, the chairman should ask if there are any further nominations. He should wait a reasonable time to see whether there are nominations from the floor.

CLOSING NOMINATIONS

A motion "to close nominations" is superfluous. When there are no further nominations the chair may say, "The chair declares the nominations closed." If one member says, "I object," the matter must be put to a vote and receive a two-thirds vote to carry.

A motion to close nominations cannot be proposed until a reasonable time has been given for the presentation of additional names. Nominations may be reopened by a motion and a majority vote after they have been closed.

When the voting is done by voice vote or by rising, a vote may be taken on each office as soon as the candidates for that particular office have been nominated; or it may be delayed until nominations for all offices have been made. When the election is by ballot, nominations for all offices are completed before the balloting, so that only one ballot is necessary.

Usually the vote necessary to elect a member to office is provided in the constitution or by-laws. A majority vote is required to elect any officer, unless there is a special provision in the by-laws for election by plurality or some other vote.

The most important thing to remember about elections is that they must be conducted in an impartial manner.

A Call to Order

What is Parliamentary Procedure?

Parliamentary procedure is a code of rules for working together in groups. It has evolved from the experience of individuals working together for a common purpose; it is logic and common sense crystalized into rules of order.

Parliamentary procedure is fundamentally alike in all democratic countries of the world. One who knows our American parliamentary system would have no difficulty in applying it elsewhere. Our procedure is founded principally on processes developed in the British Parliament. The rules of procedure as used in the British Parliament were transplanted to America with the first colonist and flourished in the free atmosphere of this country.

The first great parliamentarian of the United States was Thomas Jefferson. As the second presiding officer in the United States Senate, Jefferson compiled a set of principles and rules to guide the Senate in its deliberations. Clear, simple, logical, the principles and rules interpreted by Jefferson have roots that grow deep into the sub-soil of freedom and equality which underlies our democracy. Jefferson understood and stated the principle of adherence to majority decision. What we know now in this country as parliamentary law or parliamentary procedure comes directly from these rules promulgated by Jefferson during the early days of our country.

In 1876 Major Henry M. Robert developed what is commonly called today "Robert's Rules of Order." Quite possibly no other book on parliamentary procedure is more widely used. Unfortunately, this book emphasizes technicalities of obstruction and disagreement rather than principles which will allow people to agree.

From Robert's work have come a series of interpretations of parliamentary procedure based upon the rules which Robert promulgated. Some have attempted to emphasize the positive approach to parliamentary procedure. The information which is to follow on parliamentary procedure is based generally upon the work of Robert but the emphasis is upon "getting things done." This idea should be kept in mind by groups and individuals using the rules and procedures which follow. What is to follow is designed specifically for secondary school groups wishing to conduct in an orderly and efficient manner the business to be transacted within their groups.

WHEN IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE NEEDED?

Whenever a group meets for the purpose of presenting proposals, discussing them, and arriving at decisions, parliamentary procedure is virtually indispensable. When binding decisions are to be made by groups, the time-tested processes of parliamentary procedure are always necessary.

FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The first purpose of parliamentary procedure is to make it easier for people to work together effectively. The object of parliamentary procedure is always constructive. The rules of parliamentary procedure are not intended to confuse the uninitiated, to trick the unwary, to multiply technicalities, nor to discourage the uninformed.

Parliamentary procedure has a language of its own. In carrying on the business of a meeting the presiding officer should use the exact, precise, indispensable phrases. The presiding officer cannot assume that this exact phraseology will be used by members. He should not emphasize ritual. There are usual ways of saying things in a meeting, but these ways may differ and still be correct. The proper way to request information is to rise and address the presiding officer: "I rise to a point of inquiry." However, if an inexperienced member should stand up and say, "I would like some information," "Please answer a question for me," the presiding officer must give the information as though the inquiry had been phrased in the formally proper language.

A second purpose of parliamentary procedure is based upon freedom of the group and of the individual, on equality of opportunities and responsibilities for all, and on the right of the majority to decide. The aim of parliamentary law is to facilitate and foster each of these rights. Actually, the aims of democracy and parliamentary procedure are identical. Parliamentary procedure intends to ensure freedom and equality to both the group and to its individual members. Parliamentary procedure provides the freedom for individuals (1) to form themselves into an organization; (2) to develop their own rules and regulations; (3) to determine their course of action; (4) to administer their own internal affairs; (5) to choose their leaders without fear of coercion; (6) to propose propositions; (7) to discuss them; (8) to decide by vote of at least a majority what action shall be taken; and (9) to carry out those decisions.

The members of a parliamentary group have the freedom to disagree, to protest, to oppose, and even to remove their leaders through orderly processes whenever those leaders fail to carry out their proper duties. Each member has the right to propose motions, nominate candidates for office, to discuss freely, to persuade, to ask questions, and—most important of all—he has the right to vote. These rights are

based upon a faith in the ability of free people to deliberate together and to make their own decisions. The mechanical means for translating these inherent rights into group action is parliamentary procedure.

A few groups and individuals unfortunately emphasize the use of technicalities rather than the simple, forthright principles. This misconception has caused many people to think of parliamentary procedure as a hair-splitting device used to obstruct and hinder straightforward decision making. Parliamentary procedure is not a bag of tricks; it is democracy at work. Its philosophy and its principles must not yield to the trickster who misuses the rules. Only discord and difficulty can result.

Through the use of parliamentary procedure in meetings the average student is enabled to come in closest contact with the principles of democracy. Through the meetings in his church, his school, his service organizations, the student learns the possibilities of democracy as well as parliamentary procedure; to understand and use the rules, and how to fulfill individual and group needs.

As parliamentary procedure is used in student activity meetings, democracy takes on concrete meaning. The average high school student through his everyday, working relationship with clubs and other student organizations enjoys a continuing experience in *living* democracy.

The third purpose of parliamentary procedure is to prepare individual students for responsible citizenship through a study of leadership and followership. At some time almost every student will be called upon to take the lead in some group activity. Good leaders are always in demand. Responsible leadership demands many skills and abilities—knowledge of the rules of working together, an understanding and appreciation of people as individuals, and of how people behave in groups.

Each student is obligated to qualify himself to serve as a leader and should prepare himself to serve as an officer of

the organizations in which he works. Learning to lead can be a deeply satisfying personal experience.

Some students say, "I prefer not to lead—I just want to be a good member." But to be a good member one likewise needs an understanding of parliamentary procedure and the skill to use it. Also, choosing an effective leader is one of the responsibilities of a good member which necessitates knowledge of what will be demanded of a leader. No member of a group can vote intelligently, or work effectively as a member, without a knowledge of the rules.

PRINCIPLES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The few fundamental principles which underlie parliamentary procedure form the basis for parliamentary rules. A thorough understanding of the principles makes parliamentary rules largely self-evident. Parliamentary rules are usually easily reasoned out from the principle from which they derive. For example, it is a principle that only one motion can be considered at a time. Therefore, it is obvious from this principle that discussion on two propositions may not be carried on at the same time.

The following are the major principles underlying parliamentary procedure:

1. **Parliamentary rules exist to facilitate and expedite the transaction of business in an atmosphere of cooperation and harmony.** A corollary to this principle is that whatever methods are simplest and most direct for accomplishing the purposes of a meeting are the appropriate methods to be used. The use of confusing technicalities, devious approaches, and the like should be avoided at all times.

2. **The will of the majority prevails.** The power of a student organization rests with the majority of its members. Democracy cannot tolerate control by a minority. True unanimous agreement is seldom possible with the result that most decisions are made by majority vote. Decisions by majority are an integral and vital element in democracy and recognition of them is essential to all people who participate in a parliamentary body.

3. **Members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations.** Every member has the right to propose motions, to discuss them, to oppose, to persuade, to nominate and be nominated, and to vote. Also, every member has the right to insist upon the protection of his rights as well as the rights of other members.

Since each member has equal rights and privileges it follows necessarily that he has equal duties and obligations. It is the responsibility of every member to see that rights, obligations, and duties remain equal among members.

4. **The rights of the minority must be protected.** There are basic rights of minorities which democracies always seek to protect. Parliamentary procedure protects the right of the minority to be heard, to protest, to seek to convince, and to understand fully the questions which are to be decided. These rights may not be infringed upon.

The membership of majorities and minorities are not static—they change constantly. Members of the majority on one issue may be part of the minority on the next. Protection of minority rights is therefore of importance to all members of the group.

5. **Every question presented for decision is fully and freely discussed.** Every member must enjoy the right of free speech—to hear and to be heard. The right of free speech is as fundamental as a member's right to vote. Every member has the right to discuss a question fully and freely without interruption, subject only to the rules applicable to all other members. "To speak my piece," "to have my chance to be heard," and "to say my say" are phrases used by members to express the fundamental democratic concept of every member's right to discuss propositions on which the assembly is to vote.

6. **The introduction and disposition of all motions is governed by an order of precedence.** Since there are motions of greater and lesser importance, it is necessary to give the most important ones a definite priority or precedence in which they must be proposed and acted upon. An orderly sequence for motions prevents confusion. Each motion has its particular rank and by proceeding from the highest motion to the lowest ranking one, the proceedings of a meeting will be clear to all members.

7. **Only one question can be considered at a time.** This principle guards against the chaos which would arise if several motions are under consideration simultaneously. By considering

each motion separately and individually and in its proper order, confusion is prevented and business expedited.

8. **The meaning of the question before the assembly must be clear to each member before he votes.** The presiding officer must be certain that the question and its implications are understood by the assembly at all times. If any member does not understand what the pending motion is, what it means, or what its effects will be, he has the right and obligation to request a full explanation. This principle underlies the right of a member to rise to a point of parliamentary inquiry or to ask questions of the presiding officer or another member.

To exercise their best judgments when they vote, members are entitled to a reasonable knowledge of the facts of a question.

9. **Duties and authority may be delegated by an organization but the membership retains the right of final decision.** Each member of an organization cannot work personally on every project of a group. Democratic governments and democratic student organizations often delegate many duties to officers and to committees which represent all the members. Officers and committees may be given the authority and the power to carry out decisions of the organization; however, when an officer or a committee submits a report, the organization has the final authority to accept or to reject it. The members of an organization also retain the right to withdraw delegated authority and to make the final decision on any matter.

10. **Parliamentary rules must be administered impartially.** Any student organization is served best when the presiding officer remains strictly impartial. The presiding officer does not take part in discussion while he is presiding and does not vote unless there is a tie. The presiding officer must not favor his friends by giving them more than their share of opportunities nor take revenge upon his opponents by denying them privileges. One of the greatest assets of any presiding officer is his ability to show no favoritism, and to treat all members alike. An impartial attitude is certain to win respect and confidence. Impartiality is mandatory in every officer and indeed highly desirable in every member of a student organization.

With these principles in mind let us consider the actual parliamentary rules and the actual procedure of accomplishing business with any group.

A Call to Order

Protocol of Parliamentary Procedure

All business of a parliamentary body is carried on by means of motions. A motion is a formal statement of a proposal for an assembly to consider and to vote upon. A formal motion is equivalent to announcing to the group: "This is something which I think we ought to do, I'd like to have your opinions about it, and then let us decide what to do about it." When a member proposes an idea for the group to consider, he introduces it by a phrase which, during the centuries, has made the proposal a formal motion: "I move. . . ." It is well to keep in mind that a motion is never "made." Motions are proposed, motions are presented, but they are never "made." A motion is sometimes referred to as a "question," a "proposition," or a "proposal."

To save time and to keep proceedings clear, every motion progresses through a series of identical steps. These steps form a process which presents the motion, states it to the assembly, opens it to discussion, and submits it to a vote. It is necessary to develop a facility for these steps and their phraseology. Only after these mechanics of a motion become automatic can one concentrate on the content of the motion. The steps in handling a motion are: (1) A member rises and addresses the presiding officer. (2) The presiding officer recognizes the member. (3) The member states his motion. (4) Another member seconds the motion.

(5) The presiding officer states the motion to the assembly. (6) Members may discuss the motion, if it is debatable. (7) The presiding officer again states the motion and takes the vote. (8) The presiding officer announces the result of the vote.

ADDRESSING THE CHAIR

Any member, except the presiding officer, may propose a motion. A motion may be presented at any time there is no business before the assembly. To present a motion, a member rises and addresses the presiding officer by his official title; for example, "Mr. President," Mr. Chairman," "Mr. Moderator," or "Madam Chairman." If the presiding officer has no distinctive or official title, he may always be addressed as "Mr. Chairman," or if the presiding officer is a woman as "Madam Chairman." Addressing the chairman is equivalent to requesting permission to present a motion or to discuss a motion already proposed. Addressing the presiding officer does not necessarily mean that the right to speak has been given until the member has been officially recognized by the presiding officer.

RECOGNITION BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The presiding officer recognizes a member by calling his name, or by speaking directly to the member. If the presiding officer does not know the member's name he may designate the speaker by saying, "The Chair recognizes the boy in the blue shirt," or "The Chair recognizes the girl in the red dress." A good leader learns the name of members without delay.

As soon as the chairman recognizes a member, that member is entitled to the undivided attention of the assembly while he proposes or discusses the matter before the group.

Ordinarily the presiding officer should recognize the person who first arises and addresses the presiding officer after the question has been proposed. There are times when the

presiding officer is justified in assigning the floor to one who was not the first to seek recognition. The following rules should guide the chairman:

1. If the member who proposed the motion has not already spoken, and if the motion is debatable, he is entitled to the floor, even though another member has risen first.
2. Once having discussed the question, a member is not entitled to recognition for further discussion as long as others wish to discuss the question.
3. Whenever possible discussion should alternate between friends and enemies of the proposal.

Above all, the presiding officer must be fair and judicious in recognizing members who wish to speak on any question before the assembly. He need not recognize people in any specific order or pattern such as working from the rear to the front or the right to the left of the assembly. He must be fair and expeditious in keeping the discussion to the point and on the question to be decided.

PROPOSING A MOTION

A motion is a proposal that the assembly take certain action or express certain sentiments. It is always stated in the form: "I move . . .," followed by the proposal to be considered. This is the correct form for proposing a motion because it definitely establishes, as a motion, the proposal which follows. Such introductory phrases as "I suggest," or "I think we should," or "I propose," or "I make a motion," or "I move you," or "I so move" are not good form.

An occasional brief introductory remark may preface a motion, but discussion or debate is usually not permissible until the motion has been stated by the chairman and is before the assembly for discussion. If it is desirable to discuss a matter before a motion can be developed, this may be done by moving that the subject be considered informally.

When a motion is complicated, or when accuracy is essential, or when the details are controversial, the proposal should be written and handed to the secretary at the time

the motion is proposed. Many school groups require all motions to be written.

When a sentiment or conviction is to be expressed, or to ensure that a motion is meticulously stated, or to phrase a motion for publication or transmittal to another body, it is customary to offer a resolution.

At one time resolutions were proposed with a number of clauses, each introduced by "whereas," which explained or presented the background or reasons for the resolution. These introductory clauses were not necessary and often detracted from the clarity of the resolution. Current practice is away from the introductory clauses except when the resolution includes the arguments vitally necessary to explain its purpose.

SECONDING MOTIONS

When a member has proposed a motion, he should take his seat. It is then in order for another member to second the motion. The seconding member, without rising, may say: "I second the motion." If the chairman does not hear a second to a motion, he may ask, "Is there a second to the motion that . . ." and repeat the motion, since it may be that some of the members have not heard or understood the motion. If no second is forthcoming, the chairman declares the motion "lost for want of a second."

Seconding a motion means that a second member wishes to have the motion considered by the assembly. It does not necessarily imply that the seconder favors the motion or intends to vote for it, although this may be true. The second is based on a belief that at least two members must be interested in the discussion of a proposition before a motion is presented to the assembly.

Routine motions, such as approving the minutes, are frequently stated by the chairman without waiting for a second, unless some member objects. If a member does object, the chairman must call for a second.

A second is not necessary to make a nomination, to ask permission to withdraw a motion, to call for a division of the house, to propose a motion to reconsider, to rise to a point of order, to voice an objection to the consideration of the question, to call for the orders of the day, to raise a question of privilege, to make parliamentary inquiry, or to request information that requires an immediate answer.

STATING THE QUESTION AND CALLING FOR DISCUSSION

As soon as the motion has been properly moved and seconded, it is the duty of the presiding officer to state the motion. Until stated, the motion is under the control of its presenter and can be withdrawn or modified by him. Once the motion has been stated to the assembly by the presiding officer, it is under the control of the body to do with it as it chooses.

Oral motions which are misleading, vague, or overly complicated may be rephrased by the presiding officer or he may request the member to rephrase his motion. If the chairman rephrases the motion, he should make sure that the meaning is not changed. The presiding officer should ask the member whether the rephrased motion, as stated to the assembly, expresses his proposal correctly.

If a motion proposes an action which is contrary to existing school rules, or to the constitution or by-laws of the organization, or if it is obviously dilatory (that is, made for the purpose of delaying business), or is completely unsuitable for consideration by the assembly, the chairman should rule it out of order. He may say, "The chair rules your motion out of order," and state the reason for doing so.

The presiding officer states a motion in the following form: "It has been moved and seconded that the Student Council have a dance on Friday night." "Is there any discussion?"

As soon as the motion has been stated to the assembly and discussion called for, it is open to discussion and debate. The motion then becomes the "pending question."

DEBATE OR DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION

A member seeks recognition to discuss a motion in the same manner as he does to propose a motion. Once a member has been recognized for the purpose of discussing a motion, he may speak as long as the rules of decorum are observed and as long as his remarks are confined to the subject.

Debate is restricted to the particular proposal under consideration. Neither the person proposing the motion nor his motives can be discussed. All discussion or debate must be impersonal and it is always addressed to the presiding officer. During debate, members must be referred to in a courteous and respectful manner. Modern practice, particularly in school groups, is to refer to members by name, as "John" or "Alice."

In debating or discussing a question no member has the right to speak twice on the same question so long as any member who has not spoken wishes to do so.

The following principles should be followed during discussion: (1) Speakers should avoid reference to personalities; (2) The motives of opponents to the proposal should not be questioned; (3) Whenever possible, reference to members by name should be avoided.

The preceding principles should not be interpreted to mean that members do not have the privilege of strongly opposing a question under consideration. However, speakers should remember that it is the question, and not an individual member, which is being considered. A major purpose of discussion is to present facts about the question under consideration. Discussion does not provide an opportunity to question the motives or judgment of those who may be opposed to a proposal.

A member who wishes to discuss a question should organize his material before asking for recognition from the chair. He will cover all the points he wishes to emphasize if he uses notes. This will help speed action and avoid the necessity of one member speaking several times during a discussion.

VOTING ON A MOTION

When it appears that all members who wish to discuss the question have done so, the presiding officer may inquire: "Is there any further discussion?" or "Are you ready for the vote?" This question gives notice that debate is about to close, and that if any member wishes to be recognized he should do so immediately. The chairman should ignore calls of "Question!" No member has a right to try to force an immediate vote in this manner. If no one rises to be recognized or to move the previous question, the chairman, after a pause, puts the question to a vote—"Those in favor of the motion that the Student Council have a dance on Friday night, please say 'Aye.' Those opposed, please signify by saying 'No.' "

If there is no doubt in the mind of the chairman as to the result of the vote he announces: "The motion is carried" or "The motion is lost." If the chairman is in doubt, he should call for another vote, even though no member requests it. The announcement of the vote by the presiding officer is the last step in the process which carries a motion from its introduction by individual member to its disposal by vote of the assembly.

There are several methods of taking a vote. The methods are by the voice vote, a show of hands, the rising vote, the roll call, the ballot, and by general or unanimous consent.

There are at least four types of votes: The majority vote, indicates a number greater than one-half of the votes cast; the plurality, indicates the most votes cast regardless of majority; the two-thirds vote, indicates that two thirds of

the members present vote in favor of the proposition; the tie vote, indicates an equal number for and against. To determine a two-thirds vote quickly, double the negative vote cast and if it is equal to or less than the affirmative vote cast, a two-thirds vote has been obtained. (Note: See pages 11-15 for more comprehensive treatment of "voting.")

A Call to Order

The Rules of Parliamentary Procedure

Motions are ranked according to a fixed and definite order in which they may be proposed, considered, and disposed of. The rank of motions, which is called "precedence," keeps the business of the meeting going with an easy efficiency, and every motion is attended to in its proper order. The order of precedence of motions is based on the degree of their urgency, and it is logical and easy to understand. The following list should be memorized. The most important motions are arranged in the order of their precedence:

privileged motions

1. Adjourn
2. Recess
3. Question of Privilege

subsidiary motions

4. Postpone temporarily ("lay on the table")
5. Vote immediately ("previous question")
6. Limit debate
7. Postpone definitely
8. Refer to committee
9. To amend
10. Postpone indefinitely

11. The main motion

For convenience and for determining their precedence, motions are classified loosely in five groups; each group has

certain general characteristics. These five groups are (1) Main motions, (2) Subsidiary motions, (3) Incidental motions, (4) Privileged motions, (5) Unclassified motions.

The chief purpose of dividing motions into the five groups is to determine their rank or precedence. This rank is fixed and definite and is based on logical reasoning. It is simple to understand and to apply.

There are two important rules of precedence:

- When a motion is pending, any motion of higher rank may be proposed, but no motion of lower rank is in order. The motion to adjourn (No. 1) has the highest rank, and a main motion (No. 11) has the lowest. If a main motion, number 11, is pending, any motion of higher rank (Nos. 10-1) can be proposed. If No. 8 is pending, No. 7-1 can all be proposed, but No. 9 or No. 10 cannot.
- Motions are considered and voted upon in inverse order to the order of their proposal, the last one proposed being considered and disposed of first. For example, if motions No. 11, 10, 7, and 2 were proposed in that order, they would be considered and voted upon in the following order: No. 2, 7, 10, and 11.

Now let us see how precedence works. At a meeting of the student council, a motion was pending "that $50 be set aside to purchase decorations for a dance." During the discussion of this main motion (No. 11), Jim Jones moved to amend it (No. 9) by striking out the "$50" and substituting the words "a sum not to exceed $60."

While this amendment was being discussed, Susie Smith said she did not think the matter could be decided by the members without further information, and moved that the matter be referred to a committee (No. 8). While this motion was under consideration, Jim Baker moved that the matter be postponed indefinitely (No. 10).

May Young immediately rose to a point of order (incidental) calling the attention of the chairman to the fact that the motion to postpone indefinitely (No. 10) was of lower rank than the motion to refer the matter to a committee (No. 8) and was therefore out of order.

The chairman ruled that the point of order was well taken and the members returned to consideration of the motion to refer to committee (No. 8).

Wayne Jackson then moved to postpone the matter temporarily (No. 4). When this motion had been stated, Lee Jefferson, who opposed the purchase of decorations and was tired of the discussion, moved that the meeting adjourn (No. 1).

All these motions, with the exception of the motion to postpone indefinitely, which was ruled out of order, were then pending before the meeting in the following order of precedence: adjourn, postpone temporarily, refer to committee, amend, main motion.

The assembly first voted on the motion to adjourn. This was lost. The chairman then called for a vote on the motion to postpone temporarily. The vote was close; Ken Young called for a division of the assembly (incidental). The chairman took a rising vote and announced that the motion to postpone temporarily (No. 4) was lost.

Next, the question to refer to committee (No. 8) was voted on, and it, too, lost. Then the motion to amend (No. 9) was discussed and voted upon. The amendment carried, so that the main motion (No. 11) then read, "that the sum not to exceed $60 be set aside to purchase decorations for the dance." After some discussion the amended main motion was voted upon and carried.

MAIN MOTIONS

Main motions introduce subjects (as contrasted with procedural questions) to an assembly for decision. Main motions constitute the principal vehicle for transacting the business of a meeting. They are the most important of all motions because they bring the main business before the meeting.

Main motions are divided into two groups. First, original or general main motions are those which have no specific

name and deal with any subject which a member may properly bring before an assembly. "The main motion" is a term applied to any original or general main motion. Second, specific main motions have been given specific names and they have some individual characteristics and rules differing from those of the original or general main motions. The most common specific main motions are: reconsider, rescind, and resume consideration. Examples of less used specific main motions are the motions to concur, ratify, reject, repeal, annul, and adopt.

A main motion has the lowest precedence or rank of all motions. That is, a main motion cannot be proposed when the group is considering any other kind of motion. A main motion yields to all subsidiary, privileged, and incidental motions. Thus, a subsidiary, privileged, or incidental motion can be proposed while a main motion is pending or being considered. Main motions are debatable and may be amended.

It is well to remember that all main motions are proposed affirmatively. That is, one does not move that . . . "the student council *not* have a dance on Saturday night." It is also well to remember that main motions contain a single thought or action; that is, it is improper to move . . . "that the student council have a dance on Friday night, and a hayride on Saturday night." Practice and skill are required to phrase motions correctly and effectively. It is important to cultivate this ability, because the good or bad phrasing of a motion influences its adoption or rejection and may either expedite business or tangle it. Before a motion is proposed, members should be certain that their motion is well-phrased. The test questions to be answered are: Is the motion clear and definite? Is the motion capable of only one reasonable interpretation? Is the motion complete? Is the motion as brief as possible? Does the motion contain anything which is irrelevant or confusing? Does the motion carry out its intended purpose? Is the motion suitably phrased to meet the situation?

If a motion is poorly phrased the presiding officer should request the proposer of the motion to restate it in a more suitable form or present the motion in writing. It is permissible for the presiding officer to rephrase a motion for the sake of clarity.

To expedite business, a main motion once considered and disposed of by the assembly cannot be discussed a second time at the same meeting.

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Subsidiary motions are assisting motions and are only in order when a main motion is pending. Often it is desirable to use certain motions as a means of disposing of or changing other motions. A subsidiary motion applied to a pending main motion provides the means of disposing of or changing the main motion. There are several kinds of subsidiary motions which will be discussed in the following paragraphs in the order of their precedence. That is, the first one listed takes precedence over all other kinds of similar motions, while the last one gives way to all other subsidiary motions.

While seven different kinds of subsidiary motions will be discussed in the following paragraphs, all are similar in that they may be applied to other motions as a means of disposing of or changing a pending main motion. All subsidiary motions take precedence over the main motions discussed previously.

By means of subsidiary motions, the main motion may be amended, referred to a committee, or action postponed or hastened. When applied to any main motion, subsidiary motions take precedence and must be acted upon before the main motion. The subsidiary motions in order of precedence are: (1) To lay on the table, (2) The previous question, (3) To limit or extend time for debate, (4) to postpone to a definite time, (5) to commit or refer to a committee, (6) to amend, (7) to postpone indefinitely.

To Lay on the Table

The effect of the motion "to lay on the table" is to defer action on the main motion question to which it is applied until a more suitable time. If passed, the motion enables a group to consider more urgent business and to take up the question again as soon as the more urgent business has been disposed of. This motion should be used only to enable a group to consider more urgent business. The motion should not be used as a means of postponing action indefinitely or to kill a question.

The example used previously, "I move that the student council have a dance on Friday night," will be considered as the main motion. In order to lay this motion on the table, it would be necessary for some member to obtain the floor and state, "I move that the question be laid on the table." This motion requires a second, and is not open to debate or amendment. Further, no subsidiary motion can be applied to this motion, as it takes precedence over all other subsidiary motions, and it cannot be reconsidered.

The motion cannot be qualified by the statement "to lay on the table until ten o'clock," as it would then become a motion "to postpone until a definite time." A motion to lay on the table permits the group to call up the question as soon as business will permit and without the necessity of waiting until a definite hour. The procedure for taking the motion from the table is discussed at a later time.

When a motion is laid on the table, it carries with it all motions relating to it. For example, if an amendment to the effect that the expenses of the dance were to be paid by the National Honor Society had been presented and seconded, this amendment would be laid on the table with the main question. The motion to lay on the table ordinarily requires a majority vote. If lost, a motion to lay on the table cannot be reconsidered. However, a new motion can be proposed as soon as there has been further progress in

the debate; it can even be proposed after the previous question is lost, provided sufficiently urgent business has come up. A motion to lay on the table yields to privileged motions. If a tabled motion is not taken from the table by the end of the next regular meeting, it dies.

To Call for the Previous Question

The purpose of the motion calling for the previous question is to close debate immediately on the main motion and all subsidiary motions attached to it, and to secure a vote on the question. A member must obtain the floor before presenting a motion calling for the previous question. The motion requires a second, it is not debatable, cannot be amended, and can have no subsidiary motions applied to it. It must therefore be voted upon at once.

The motion calling for the previous question should be used whenever the purpose is to stop debate at once and to secure a vote on the question. Calls of "Question, Question" are disorderly, and should not be recognized by the chair.

To illustrate use of the previous question, suppose some member believed that the motion, "I move that the student council have a dance on Friday night," together with the amendment, "with expenses paid by the National Honor Society," had been sufficiently discussed and that there was little reason for postponing action or for continuing the discussion. The member could obtain the floor and propose a motion as follows: "I move the previous question on the motion that the student council have a dance on Friday night with the expenses to be paid by the National Honor Society." As soon as this motion is seconded, it should be voted upon, since it is not debatable and cannot be amended or have any subsidiary motions applied to it.

In putting the question, the presiding officer should state, "The previous question is moved on the question that the student council have a dance on Friday night with the

expenses to be paid by the National Honor Society." "Those in favor of previous question will please rise." After the vote has been counted, he continues, "Be seated. Those opposed will please rise." If the previous question is passed, the chair immediately puts the questions included in the call for the question. In this particular case the amendment would be put first and then the main question.

Since the call for the previous question has the effect of ending discussion, it requires a two-thirds vote rather than a majority vote. In announcing the vote, the chair should state, "There being two-thirds in favor, the ayes have it, and the previous question is ordered on the motion that the Student Council have a dance on Friday night and the amendment, with expenses to be paid by the National Honor Society." In announcing the vote, if the motion was lost, he would state, "There being less than two-thirds in favor of the motion, the motion is lost. The question for discussion is . . ." (here he announces the question pending at the time the motion calling for the previous question was made). The motion calling for the previous question yields to privileged motions and to the subsidiary motion "to lay on the table," as well as to incidental motions.

To Limit or Extend Time for Debate

The purpose of the motions to limit or extend time for debate is to define the number and time of speeches or speakers. For example, when an important question is pending many members may wish to express their views. Consequently, the number of speeches and the time allotted to each may be specified through use of these motions. Any subsidiary motion to limit or extend time for debate must be presented by a member who has been recognized, and must be seconded. The motions require a two-thirds vote and are not debatable but they may be amended. They may be proposed only when the question to which they refer is debatable. When a motion to limit or to extend time for

debate is pending, another motion that does not conflict with it may be offered as an amendment. For example, if the motion pending was to limit each member to one speech, an amendment might be offered limiting each speech to a definite number of minutes.

A motion to limit or to extend the time of debate can be reconsidered. That is, if each member has been limited to one five-minute speech, a motion to reconsider may be in order and if carried would permit members to make a change.

The forms which this motion may take depend upon the object which is to be accomplished. If the object is to limit or extend the number of speeches which any one member may make, the motion might be, "I move that each member be allowed to speak but once on the question," or "I move that each of the two opposing leaders, Alice and John, be allowed to speak three times on the question." If the purpose is to limit or extend the length of members' speeches, the motion might be, "I move that debates be limited to five minutes for each member," or "I move that the limit be extended to twenty minutes for each member." If the purpose is to close debate at a given time, the motion might be, "I move that discussion close and that the question be voted on by eight o'clock P.M.," or "I move that debate on the pending question be limited to twenty minutes."

The motion to limit or extend the time of debate yields to privileged and incidental motions, and to subsidiary motions "to lay on the table" and "to call for the previous question." Thus a motion to lay a pending question on the table takes precedence over a motion to the effect that the questions be voted on by eight o'clock.

To Postpone to a Definite Time

A motion to postpone to a definite time, if carried, postpones action on the pending question, as does the subsidiary motion "to lay on the table" discussed previously. The

former, unlike the motion to lay on the table, postpones action to a definite time. For example, if there was some reason why consideration should be deferred until a definite time, a motion to postpone should be used rather than the motion "to lay on the table." Thus, if several members are to be absent from a meeting for a part of the time, it would be possible to postpone action until their return; however, if the motion were laid on the table, it would be possible for a group which might be in the minority when all members were present to take the question from the table and pass or reject the motion before the absent members returned. Since a motion to postpone to a definite time does not affect the rights of the members, only a majority vote is required.

A motion to postpone to a definite time takes precedence over motions to refer to a committee, to amend, and to postpone indefinitely, but yields to all privileged and incidental motions and to the subsidiary motions discussed previously; that is, to lay on the table, to call for the previous question, and to limit or extend time of debate. A motion to postpone to a definite time allows limited debate regarding the desirability of postponing or not postponing action on the pending question, and is subject to amendments. The previous question and the motions to limit or extend time for debate may be applied to it, but a motion to lay on the table cannot be applied to a motion to postpone to a definite time. A motion to lay the *main question* on the table may be considered, however, when a motion to postpone to a definite time is pending. If the main motion is laid on the table, it carries with it the motion to postpone to a certain time.

To Refer to a Committee

The purpose of the motion to refer to a committee is to place the question temporarily in the hands of a committee. A motion to refer to a committee is debatable, can be

amended, requires only a majority vote, and requires a second. The motion takes precedence over the subsidiary motions to amend and to postpone indefinitely, but yields to the subsidiary motions discussed previously and to all privileged and incidental motions. A motion to refer to a committee may be reconsidered, but only before a committee has begun consideration of the question. It is possible, however, to discharge the committee.

The form of a motion to refer to a committee varies from the simple motion, "I move to refer the question to a committee," to a rather complete form such as, "I move that the matter of having a dance on Friday be referred to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair and given full power to act, the committee to report its action at the next regular meeting." While the motion to refer to a committee actually has the effect of postponing action on a pending question, the object is not to postpone the question, but to give an opportunity for the question to be investigated more carefully and to secure more information about it.

A special committee to consider a question should have on it members who are on opposing sides of the question. This will give a better opportunity for the question to be discussed thoroughly, and increase members' confidence in the findings of the committee.

When a motion to refer to committee is offered in the simple form, "I move to refer the question to a committee," there are at least three courses that may be followed: (1) The details may be completed by amendments or suggestion; (2) The chair may call for suggestions for completing the details; or (3) The motion may be put to a vote by a motion calling for the previous question. The latter procedure (of calling for the previous question) is followed when the motion to refer to a committee is practically certain to be lost. Thus considerable time is saved that would otherwise be wasted in completing details of a motion that would later be lost. Calling for the previous question on the mo-

tion to refer to a committee is usually done by a member opposed to the motion to refer. If the motion to refer to a committee is adopted in the simple form, the details should be completed before any new business except privileged matters is considered.

To Amend

The purpose of a motion to amend is to alter or modify another pending motion. A motion to amend must be proposed by one who has the floor and must be seconded. The motion requires only a majority vote for adoption, even though the amendment is to a question that requires a two-thirds vote.

Only one amendment of the second degree (that is, an amendment to an amendment) is in order at one time. An amendment of the third degree (that is, to amend an amendment to an amendment) is too complicated and is never in order. Only one amendment of the first degree is permitted at any one time on the pending question. Thus, only one amendment and a maximum of one amendment to the amendment are in order at any one time, although any number of amendments may be offered in succession.

An amendment is not in order under the following circumstances:

1. If it makes the affirmative of an amended question equivalent to the negative of the original question,
2. If it strikes out or adds words that would not leave a sensible question before the group, or
3. If it is absurd.

An amendment to add the words "and purchase a new desk" to the motion that "the student council have a dance on Friday night" would be out of order because it is not related (germane) to the question. Likewise, an amendment to add the word "not" after the word "council" would be out of order since it merely changes the question from the affirmative to the negative. That is, a negative vote on the ques-

tion "that we have a dance on Friday night" would have the same effect as an affirmative vote on the question "that the student council not have a dance on Friday night." An amendment should not be contrary to the spirit of the original motion.

The chair should always make certain that the members know the effect of the amendments they are voting upon, and in putting the question he should, if necessary, give clearly the effect of the adoption of the amendment.

A motion to amend takes precedence over the subsidiary motion "to postpone indefinitely," but yields to the other subsidiary motions discussed previously. It also yields to all privileged and incidental motions. Motions to call for the previous question, or to extend the time of debate may be applied to any amendment of either the first or second degree; and, under such conditions, they do not affect the main question.

To Postpone Indefinitely

The real object of a motion to postpone indefinitely is not to postpone, but to reject the motion to which it is applied. This motion is usually proposed by the enemies of the motion when they are in doubt as to whether they are in the minority or the majority. Adoption of a motion to postpone indefinitely rejects the motion to which it applies without the risk involved in a direct vote on the issue. If the motion is adopted, the main question is suppressed for that session unless the vote is reconsidered. In this case, only an affirmative vote can be reconsidered and, if lost, the motion cannot be renewed.

The motion to postpone indefinitely is debatable and opens the main question to debate, thus in proposing this motion, members who have exhausted their privilege to speak on the main question are enabled to speak again since, theoretically at least, the question is different. Practically, there is no difference, since the question has been changed

from one of adopting the motion to one of rejecting the question, and in both cases the main question is open for discussion.

The advantage of a motion to postpone indefinitely is that it gives those opposed to the pending question an opportunity to reject the measure without riski ' a direct vote. If those opposed fail, they still have an opportunity to reject the main question; and the vote on the motion to postpone indefinitely has given an opportunity to determine the strength of those opposed to, or in favor of, the question. In a certain sense it is a kind of trial vote, with those opposed standing to lose little or nothing if the motion to postpone indefinitely fails to carry.

The motion to postpone indefinitely yields to all subsidiary motions, as well as to all priviliged and incidental motions. It cannot be amended and can have no subsidiary motions applied to it except a motion calling for the previous question, or one limiting or extending time for debate. A motion to postpone indefinitely can be proposed by one who has the floor and must be seconded. A majority vote is necessary for its adoption.

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

Incidental motions relate to those actions that are necessary in order to ensure that a group may work together effectively and smoothly. Incidental motions rise out of a pending question, and, as a result, they must be decided before a decision is made on the question to which they are incidental. Incidental motions yield to privileged motions, and to the subsidiary motion to lay on the table. Incidental motions have no relative rank among themselves.

Enforcement of correct procedure during a business meeting is primarily the duty of the presiding officer. However, he cannot be expected to detect every error or omission so this duty is shared with the members. If the chairman does not notice a mistake or omission, or if he notices it and

fails to correct it, there are several motions which members may use as tools to enforce observation of correct procedure. These motions rise incidentally out of the main motion which is pending before the assembly. They may be proposed at any time and must be decided as soon as they arise.

To Rise to a Point of Order

The purpose of a point of order is to call attention to the violation of the rules, to an omission, or to a mistake in procedure. To do this the member rises and says, "Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order." If a member is speaking at the time, the speaker immediately takes his seat, and the chair asks the member who stated the point of order to identify the point being violated. The chair does this by a statement such as, "State your point of order." The member may reply, "The remarks of the speaker are not related to the question under consideration," or make any other reply which indicates the point which the member thought was being violated. The member is immediately seated, as a point of order is not debatable, cannot be amended, and is usually decided by the chair without discussion.

If the chair agrees with the member who raised the question of order, his agreement might be indicated by a statement such as, "Your point of order is well taken."

A member may interrupt a speaker to rise to a point of order if the point is important enough to justify such interruption, or if the point should be raised at that particular time. It is, however, highly desirable to refrain from interrupting the speaker.

A question of order requires no second; takes precedence over the pending question out of which it arises; cannot have any subsidiary motion applied to it; yields to a motion to lay on the table and to privileged motions. As indicated previously, a question of order is usually decided immediately by the chair, but when in doubt the chair may refer

the question to the parliamentarian or to the assembly by some such statement as, "The chair is in doubt and submits the question to the assembly" or ". . . to the parliamentarian." A majority vote is required when a point of order is submitted to the assembly.

Since there can be no appeal from a point of order decided by the assembly, the question is open for debate except (1) when it relates to violation of the rules of speaking; (2) when it relates to the priority of business; (3) when it is made during a division of the house; or (4) when it is made while an undebatable question is pending.

To Appeal from the Decision of the Chair

The purpose of an appeal from a decision of the chair is to enable any member to help the assembly decide by vote whether the chair's decision should be upheld or overruled. This motion is useful when someone believes that the presiding officer has made a decision which is wrong or unfair.

An appeal may be made from any decision of the chair, but it must be made immediately following a ruling of the chair.

If a member desires to appeal, he immediately rises following the announcement of the chair's decision and says: "Mr. Chairman, I appeal from the decision of the chair." To do this, he need not wait to be recognized and should be seated as soon as he has completed his statement. If the appeal is seconded, the chair may give his reasons for his decision, after which he puts the question by saying, "The question is whether the decision of the chair shall stand as the opinion of the group. Those in favor of upholding the decision of the chair say 'Aye,' those opposed say 'No.' The 'Ayes' have it and the decision of the chair is upheld." An appeal is debatable only when the preceding motion is debatable.

A tie vote sustains the decision of the chair. The chairman may cast a vote making a tie and thus upholding the

decision of the chair. The justification for this action is that a majority vote is necessary before a decision of the chair can be reversed.

To Suspend the Rules

The purpose of the motion to suspend rules is to allow an assembly to take some emergency action or to do something which is contrary to the rules of the organization or to the rules of parliamentary procedure.

The proper language is, "I move to suspend the rules of our order of business so that we may listen to Principal Brown immediately." The chairman then responds, "It has been moved and seconded to suspend the rules of our order of business so that we may listen to Principal Brown immediately." A vote is then taken and if it is affirmative the rules stand suspended. If the vote is negative the meeting proceeds in its usual course.

The motion to suspend rules is an incidental motion which seeks to meet emergencies. It frequently happens that an assembly has adopted rules or a program which make it impossible to cope with a situation which arises suddenly. The motion to suspend rules is generally concerned with rules relating to priority of business, or business procedure, or procedural rules. Rules may be suspended only for a specific purpose and for a limited time. If rules were suspended for an indefinite period, this would be equivalent to amending the rules. For this reason the object of the suspension must be specified, and only the act or acts named in the motion can be performed under the suspension. Just as soon as the specified acts are performed, for which the rules were suspended, the suspended rule automatically becomes effective again.

The provisions of a constitution or by-laws cannot be suspended unless there is a specific provision in the constitution or by-laws for their suspension. No rules which are designed to protect absentees, such as rules requiring notice

of meetings or fixing of quorum, can be suspended at any time. It is, of course, impossible to suspend any administrative school rule.

To Call for a Division of the House

The purpose of calling for a division of the house is to secure an accurate count of the vote, especially when the vote has been taken by voice vote. A division of the house may be called for any time after a question has been put and even after the result has been announced, provided the vote was taken by voice, and no motion has been presented since announcing the vote.

To call for a division of the house, a member simply rises and says, "I call for a division of the house," and again resumes his seat. No second is required, and the call for a division cannot be amended, debated, or have any other subsidiary motions applied to it. If a division is called for as soon as a question is put, the chair announces, "A division of the house has been called for. Those in favor of the motion please stand." After the vote has been counted he continues: "Be seated. Those opposed rise." After the negative vote has been counted he requests those standing to be seated and announces the vote. When the assembly is large, the chair should appoint tellers to count the vote. If a vote has already been taken before a division has been called for, the chair follows the same procedure as given previously.

Any member has the right to call for a division of the house or standing vote whenever there is any question as to whether the vote represented the will of the majority. This privilege, however, should not be abused and used as a means of wasting time or annoying the chair and others. Under such conditions, the chair has the responsibility and privilege of taking positive action to discontinue the practice.

To Fix the Time of Adjournment

To fix the time of adjournment is a privileged motion only if proposed while another motion is pending and only

when an assembly has made no provision for meeting again. This motion becomes a main motion if proposed when no other motion is pending, or when an assembly has already provided for another meeting. As a main motion, the motion is debatable and may be amended or have subsidiary motions applied to it. As a privileged motion, it takes precedence over all motions and is in order even after a vote to adjourn has been taken, provided the chairman has not announced the meeting is adjourned.

When a group adjourns to ". . . a specific time," the second meeting is considered to be a continuation of the first meeting. The time at which to adjourn must be prior to the next regular meeting. This motion is used when it is desired to prolong a certain meeting. Suppose that the by-laws of an organization state that the election of officers and the auditing of the books must be done at the meeting held the first Tuesday in May. Suppose also that other business make it impossible to transact all the business and to perform the duties assigned on the date set. The meeting can then be adjourned to some time such as the next day, next week, or next month, and the adjourned meeting will be a legal continuation of the meeting held the first Tuesday in May.

To Request Parliamentary Information

A request for parliamentary information may be stated while another member has the floor, even interrupting a speech, if the question requires immediate attention. Such questions, however, should not be permitted to interrupt a speaker any more than is necessary to do justice to the one raising the question. The chairman may defer his answer until a speech is finished if he thinks there is no necessity for answering it at once.

The proper language is, "Mr. Chairman, I rise to ask for parliamentary information." The speaker stops and the chairman says, "State your question." The speaker may continue then with his question. The chairman may then

answer the question, after which the first speaker is asked to continue. The privilege of asking for parliamentary information should not be abused, and the chairman should prevent such requests when they are made for any reason other than an honest attempt to secure information that is immediately needed.

To Request Information

To request information has the same privileges as a request for parliamentary information. That is, such requests may be made when another has the floor, or even during a speech if the information requested is essential and needed immediately. If the member wishes to ask the speaker a question rather than the chairman, he may say, "Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the speaker a question." The chairman then asks the speaker if he is willing to be interrupted for question. The inquiring member may continue, "I should like to ask the speaker. . . ." The inquirer should be seated immediately after asking the question, as the answer is not debatable whether satisfactory or not. If the speaker consented to the interruption, the time used is taken out of the time allowed him for his remarks. Here again, members should not raise questions unless the answers are immediately essential. If necessary, the chair should prevent the privileges of the speaker from being imposed upon.

To Ask Permission to Withdraw or Modify a Motion

Until a motion has been stated by the chairman, the person who proposed the motion can withdraw or modify it in any way that he desires without asking permission of anyone. If the changes do not meet with the approval of the member who seconded the motion, the seconder my withdraw his second.

After a question has been seconded and stated by the chairman, it is in the possession of the assembly and cannot be withdrawn or modified without the approval of the group.

To modify a motion after it has been stated by the chairman, the mover should rise, secure recognition, and state, "I wish to modify my motion by. . . ." The chair may ask, "Is there any objection to the motion being modified by. . . .?" He hesitates and, if no objection is raised, continues, "There being no objection, the motion is modified and now reads as follows . . ." and proceeds to state or read the motion. If any objection is raised, a motion is necessary in order to make the change. If the mover of the main motion wishes to accept an amendment that has been offered, he may say, "Mr. Chairman, I accept the amendment." If no objection is raised, the chairman announces the motion as amended; but if any member objects, the motion can be amended only as explained previously under the heading, "To Amend."

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

Privileged motions are unlike subsidiary and incidental motions in that they do not relate to the pending question. As privileged questions, they are, however, of much importance and take precedence over all other motions. Privileged motions are undebatable. Certain motions may be privileged motions under certain conditions and belong to other classes of motions under different conditions.

Privileged motions that will be discussed are: (1) To fix the time at which to adjourn; (2) To adjourn; (3) To take a recess; and (4) To raise a question of privilege.

To Adjourn

A simple motion to adjourn is always a privileged motion unless the effect would be to disband the organization permanently. This would be the case if, through the by-laws or otherwise, some future meeting date was not set. In organized groups meeting regularly through the year, the motion to adjourn is always a privileged motion. As a privileged motion, the motion to adjourn takes precedence over

all motions except a motion to fix a time to which to adjourn. The privileged motion to adjourn can be offered only by one who has the floor, requires a second, cannot be reconsidered, cannot be amended or debated, and can have no subsidiary motion applied to it. A motion to adjourn when not privileged, is considered as a main motion and is then subject to subsidiary motions, is debatable, and may be amended.

The form is "I move to adjourn." A motion to adjourn may be withdrawn, and, if proposed while important and necessary business is still to be transacted, the chair should so explain and ask the one proposing the motion to withdraw it. If necessary, the chair may rule the motion to adjourn out of order, although any member may appeal from the decision of the chair, as previously explained. If important announcements are to be made, they should be made before the vote is taken, or, at least, before announcing the meeting adjourned. Members should not leave their seats until the chair has announced the meeting adjourned. A majority vote is required to carry a motion to adjourn.

To Take a Recess

A motion to take a recess is a privileged motion whenever it is offered when other business is pending. If stated when no motion is pending, the motion is considered as a main motion and may have subsidiary motions applied to it, may be debated, amended, and otherwise handled as a main motion. A privileged motion to take a recess is not debatable and can have no subsidiary motion applied to it except a motion to amend, and such amendment can apply only to the length of time to recess. It yields only to the two privileged motions discussed previously, and, like them, must be seconded and proposed by a member who obtains recognition.

To propose the motion a member, after being recog-

nized, may state, "I move that we take a ten minute recess," or "I move that we recess until one o'clock P.M. today." In such cases the recess would be effective upon passage, but in some cases a recess may not be enforced for some time. For example, at eight o'clock A.M., the following motion may be proposed, "I move that we recess from ten o'clock A.M. until eleven o'clock A.M. today." If carried, the chair would announce at ten o'clock A.M., "The meeting stands recessed until eleven o'clock A.M. today."

To Raise a Question of Privilege

Questions of privilege may relate to privileges of the group or of a single member. Questions of privilege affecting the group take precedence over questions relating to individual privileges, and both take precedence over all questions except the three privileged questions discussed previously; that is, to fix the time to which to adjourn, to adjourn, and to take a recess. If the question of privilege requires immediate attention, a member may interrupt a speech in raising the question. In this case he simply rises and says, "Mr. Chairman, I rise to a question of personal privilege." The speaker stops, and the chair may ask, "What is your question?" The question may be, "There is so much confusion in the room that those in the rear of the room cannot hear the speaker," or "The light is so poor that we cannot see the figures that the speaker is referring to on the blackboard." A question of privilege and a privileged question are not the same.

UNCLASSIFIED MOTIONS

Several motions which cannot be readily classified, and the main motions to rescind and to ratify, are discussed briefly in the following paragraphs. Motions included in this group are: (1) To take from the table; (2) To reconsider; and (3) To rescind.

To Take from the Table

The motion to take from the table is not debatable, cannot be amended, can have no subsidiary motions applied to it, and cannot be rescinded. The motion takes precedence over no pending question and yields to privileged and incidental motions, but not to subsidiary motions. The motion to take from the table can be renewed repeatedly after the pending business has been disposed of, but is not in order unless business has been transacted since the motion to lay on the table was passed. A renewal of a motion to take from the table is not in order unless some business has been transacted since the motion was lost. A majority vote is necessary to carry the motion.

While a motion to take from the table takes precedence over no pending question, it is given preference over main motions if proposed during the session that the motion to lay on the table was passed. Thus, if two members rise about the same time after business has been disposed of, the member to propose a motion, says, "Mr. Chairman, I rise to propose a motion to take from the table." The chair should then assign him the floor if the other member has risen to offer another question or propose another motion. If, however, a new motion has been proposed and stated by the chair, the motion to take from the table is not in order until this question has been disposed of.

Suppose a motion to take from the table was in order, and a member wished to propose such a motion regarding the student council dance on Friday night. To do this, a member would rise, obtain the floor, and state, "I move to take from the table the motion that the student council have a dance on Friday night." This motion requires a second, and, since it cannot be debated, amended, or have subsidiary motions applied to it, it should be voted upon at once. When a motion is taken from the table, all questions adhering to the motion are also taken from the table. Thus, if an amendment was pending to the effect that the National

Honor Society will pay the expenses, this amendment would be taken from the table with the motion and would be acted upon before the main question. If a motion to postpone until a definite time was pending when the motion was laid on the table, and the motion was not removed from the table until after the time mentioned in the pending motion, no attention is paid to the motion to postpone until a definite time.

If a motion is taken from the table on the same day the question was tabled, members who have used their privilege of speaking on the question cannot again discuss the question. If the question is taken from the table on a day following the day that it was laid on the table, members have the same privilege of discussing the question as they would have on a new motion. A question that has been taken from the table can again be laid on the table after progress of business or debate.

To Reconsider

The motion to reconsider can be proposed only on the meeting day, or the meeting day following, the vote on the question to be considered. Recess times are not included. The motion to reconsider can be proposed only by one who voted with the winning side. The motion to reconsider cannot be applied to a vote on a motion that can be renewed within a reasonable space of time, or when the same results can be obtained by some other parliamentary action.

A modification of a vote to reconsider is "a vote to reconsider and have entered on the minutes." This procedure prevents a temporary majority from taking action that would be opposed by a larger group, and also gives time to notify members of the action taken. The motion to reconsider and have entered on the minutes can be offered only by one who voted with the winning side. Thus, a member who opposes the question should vote with the temporary majority in order to be qualified to propose a motion to reconsider and have entered on the minutes.

To Rescind

With certain exceptions, any vote taken may be rescinded, (repealed or annuled), provided notice of the approaching action has been given at a previous meeting or is included in the agenda for the meeting. Votes cannot be rescinded when a legal contract is involved if the other contracting party has been notified, or when members have been elected to, or expelled from, office or membership, provided the member was present at the time or has been notified. In the cases of expulsion, members can be reinstated only by being elected again. Votes to rescind cannot be applied to acts that the group cannot undo.

Occasionally a group wishes not only to repeal a certain action, but wishes to also express their dissatisfaction with their former action. This can be done by a motion "to rescind from the record." When such motion is carried, the statement is circled in the minutes and the statement "rescinded by order of the assembly," is written within the circle, together with the date. The statement should be signed by the secretary. The rescinded material should not be blotted out or defaced so as not to be readable. At least a majority vote of the total membership is required before rescinded material can be removed from the minutes.

A Call to Order

A Look to the Future

Out of the effort that goes into the work of various kinds of school activity groups by faculty and students will come valuable contributions to learning. The study and practice that student leaders now perform will help to develop guidelines for the evaluation of student activity organization; its ethics, administration, finances, and achievement calculated in terms of learning. Also, out of the study which students do now in regard to the efforts of organized school groups will come solutions for common problems. New ideas, new methods, and improved ways of working together in groups will heighten the contributions which student organizations can make to the educational climate of schools. In addition, valuable learning experiences will be provided for secondary-school youth in general.

The priceless rights of free speech, free assemblage, and freedom to participate in voluntary groups is denied millions of human beings in the world today. In America, however, these freedoms are flourishing. They will continue to exist and grow stronger only as they are exercised. Our student activity groups are our "greatest phenomenon." They deserve our best efforts.

QUICK REFERENCE CHART

Motion	Can Interrupt Speaker	Requires A Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Page
I MAIN	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	37
II SUBSIDIARY						
1. Lay on the Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	40
2. Previous Question	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	41
3. Limit Debate	No	Yes	No	Yes	Two-thirds	42
4. Postpone Definitely	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	43
5. Refer to Committee	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	44
6. Amend	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	46
7. Postpone Indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	47
III INCIDENTAL						
1. Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	49
2. Appeal	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Tie or majority	50
3. Suspend Rules	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	51
4. Division of House	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	52
5. Fix Time of Adjournment	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	52
6. Parliamentary Inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	53
7. Request Information	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	54
8. Withdraw Motion	No	No	No	No	No Vote	54
IV PRIVILEGED						
1. Adjourn	Yes	No	No	No	Majority	55
2. Recess	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	56
3. Question of Privilege	No	Yes	No	No	No Vote	57
V UNCLASSIFIED						
1. Take from Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	58
2. Reconsider	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	59
3. Rescind	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	60

About the Author

Donald I. Wood received his B.A. from the University of San Antonio, M.Ed. from Trinity University, San Antonio, and his Ph.D. from the University of Texas. For many years, he was a Social Studies teacher and student council adviser in La Feria and San Antonio, Texas. From 1951 to 1956 he was Executive Secretary of the Texas Association of Student Councils, and from 1956 to 1958 Associate in Safety Education, National Commission on Safety Education, NEA. He was a Fellow of the Fund for the Advancement of Education and spent a year studying at Harvard, Columbia, and George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He was also a member and Chairman of the NASC Advisory Committee.

Dr. Wood is a leading authority on the student council and is much in demand as speaker and consultant. He has served as consultant in dozens of summer student council workshops, has taught classes in student activities at the University of Oregon, and has written well over two dozen articles on various phases of the activity program. He has also served as a member of a team evaluating the schools of Japan. Dr. Wood is now Head of the Department of Education, Rice University, Houston, Texas.